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Letter dated 28 November 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Summary of the International Workshop on Environmental Effects Related to Waste Originating from Chemical Munitions Dumped at Sea, which took place on 5 November 2012 in Gdynia, Poland (see annex).

I would be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 20.

(*Signed*) Raimonda **Murmokaitė**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 28 November 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Summary of the International Workshop on Environmental Effects Related to Waste Originating from Chemical Munitions Dumped at Sea (5 November 2012, Gdynia, Poland)

1. The International Workshop on Environmental Effects Related to Waste Originating from Chemical Munitions Dumped at Sea, held on 5 November 2012 in Gdynia, Poland, was a gathering of representatives and experts, academic and research institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

2. The participants discussed environmental, safety and security challenges and effects posed by waste originating from sea-dumped chemical munitions in various parts of the world (eastern and western coasts of the continental United States of America and near Hawaii, eastern coast of Canada, Vieques and Culebra Islands of Puerto Rico and the Baltic Sea), as well as national and international responses to them. In this regard, valuable contributions were submitted by the Chairman of the Fourth International Dialogue on Underwater Munitions, held from 1 to 3 October 2012 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and the representative of the Chemical Munitions, Search and Assessment (CHEMSEA) project conducted in the Baltic Sea region.

3. The work by the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) was emphasized as an example of excellent regional cooperation that could be used in setting guidelines for other regions.

4. It was noted that not only regional organizations but also industries as such should become important actors in awareness-raising, both by offering sounder technical solutions to this issue, assessing impact and surveying potential effects, disclosing information on observed cases of waste originating from sea-dumped chemical munitions and, moreover, monitoring the potential impact on the marine environment in relation to performed clearing activities of waste originating from sea-dumped chemical munitions. It was re-emphasized that a mechanism of reporting observed cases by stakeholders other than fishermen should be developed.

5. It was also highlighted that relevant technology for remediation activities has been developed, and some remediation efforts have been conducted on a small scale, especially in eastern Canada (Nova Scotia), the eastern United States and Japan, during underwater economic activities by industries in the Baltic Sea. However, the comprehensive remediation of waste originating from sea-dumped chemical munitions worldwide for the time being remains unlikely owing to financial and political constraints. It was also noted that in some specific cases a comprehensive remediation of waste originating from sea-dumped chemical munitions could cause detrimental effects to the environment, human health, safety and security.

6. It has been reaffirmed by all participants that General Assembly resolution 65/149, inviting more coordination and further cooperation in sharing information on a voluntary basis and raising awareness on this subject, is very important for the whole process of environment protection. It was also emphasized that that resolution should serve as a tool to facilitate information gathering in an inclusive manner with regard to sea-dumped chemical munitions, their impact on the environment and

eventual effects on human health, security and safety. The importance of submitting the views of States Members of the United Nations, relevant regional and international organizations and industry on these issues was also emphasized. For that purpose, the participants elaborated a reporting module which would facilitate the submission of data, information and views to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in 2013. The reporting module is an enclosure to the present summary.

7. The Workshop helped to advance efficient implementation of General Assembly resolution 65/149.

Enclosure

Reporting module in response to General Assembly resolution 65/149 entitled "Cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea"

On Lithuania's initiative, the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session adopted by consensus the resolution entitled "Cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea". In the resolution, the Assembly invited the Secretary-General to seek the views of States Members of the United Nations and relevant regional and international organizations on issues relating to the environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. The aim of this document is to facilitate submission of information by Member States and relevant international and regional organizations in a structured and succinct manner.

Actual situation in your region

- Is there a risk for your country or its industries to be affected by waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea?
- Does your country's scientific community examine environmental effects related to such waste? What are the conclusions and findings of these scientific researches?
- Does the industry of your respective country face eventual obstacles in implementing economic projects because of such waste? How is this issue handled?

Response to incidents

- Does your government have experience in responding to actual incidents related to such waste?
- Has your government developed a relevant action plan and necessary capabilities/capacities in order to respond to incidents related to such waste?

Public awareness-raising

- Does your government/organization provide information on such waste to its citizens, civil society and industry in order to prevent eventual incidents?
- How does your government/organization raise public awareness with regard to this issue?

International cooperation

- Does your government share best practices on public awareness-raising and incidents prevention in fishing, shipping and other industrial activities or other kinds of incidents related to such waste?

- Does your government cooperate with other States and regional and international organizations on the issue of such waste?
- What would be the best way to share experience and exchange information on recent scientific findings and all other relevant information with regard to the impact on the environment caused by such waste?